

JEREMIAH ON GOD'S WORDS

Lesson Three

Then the LORD reached out His hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "Now, I have put My words in your mouth." 1:9

The word of the LORD came to [Jeremiah], saying . . . 1:4, 13:3, 13:8, 16:1, 18:5, 24:4, 29:30, 32:8,26, 34:12, 35:12, 37:6

When Your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight, for I bear Your Name, O LORD God Almighty. 15:16

But if I say, "I will not mention Him or speak any more in His Name," His word is in my heart like a burning fire, shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot. 20:9

"Is not My word like fire," declares the LORD, "and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?" 23:29

I knew that this was the word of the LORD . . . 32:8



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My husband had to take off some nails, with these resulting sparks. Amazing!

The word of God is living and active, sharper than a two-edged sword ... Hebrews 4:12

Lessons and Questions

God has some things He wants us to hear, whether words of tender love and rescue or words of warning and harsh consequences. Jeremiah was charged with fearlessly speaking both sorts (1:7,8; 17-19), and was intensely disliked because he told it **all!** Being obedient to speak the good and the bad landed him in the bottom of a muddy cistern, left to die (chapter 38).

Question: According to God, what are you supposed to be saying to our culture? How is God asking you to speak this word to our world: through a blog, through books, through printed material? Through art, through music? Through creative means, through writing Bible studies, through teaching at your church or in your neighborhood or in the pub on the corner? And

importantly, are you taking these words to heart in your own life?

Initially, Jeremiah was **overjoyed** with God's words; later, he became **overwhelmed** with this life of speaking on God's behalf! It's easy to speak when you're exuberant, but when you're **overcome**, that's a different story. The fire that began in his heart threatened to consume him. So he tried to stuff it, to stop it, to end his discomfort, to feel better; but the fire grew! His restlessness from **not** speaking grew to be too much, and he found himself again speaking what God commanded, whether or not his life was forfeit. His call and conviction stood the test.

Has your enthusiasm for God, His word, and His ways waned lately? Though you were once "baptized with fire" (Luke

3:16), have you found that lately it is easy to "put out the fire of the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19)?

The Bible is full of metaphors about the word of God. For example, it's pictured as a fire, a hammer, a sword (Eph. 6), and food (John 4). All of these cause transformation, and not necessarily in pleasant ways! The words of God speak the truth to us: we're sinners. We deserve death and hell. We are deeply loved. Our choices matter. Some of these truths hit like a hammer; some delight us. Will you listen to the words of God today? Will you allow His words to transform your life and set you ablaze?

"Father, open our ears and eyes to understand You and Your words. Help us to speak Your words with grace and truth, from a heart of affection. Amen."